

Need to include the work pertaining to preservation and maintenance of water resources under operational framework of MGNREGA- Laid

SHRI K. C. VENUGOPAL (ALAPPUZHA): The severe weather conditions and heat waves in the state of Kerala have precipitated need for cleansing of water bodies together with its conservation, including canals, rivers and water storage facilities. In order to mitigate these challenges and ensure the sustainability of water resources, it is imperative to undertake immediate remedial actions. These should include removal of silt and debris from water bodies together with dredging and restoration, to preserve critical water bodies. Considering the vital importance of environmental protection, rural development, and the provision of safe water, I urge that these measures be incorporated into the operational framework of the Mahatma Gandhi National Rural Employment Guarantee Program (MGNREGA) and prompt implementation be done to secure the water needs of our rural communities and safeguard long-term sustainability of water resources. Additionally, while the MGNREGA programme already is running on a deficit of Rs.9,754 crore, the Government made no hike in the budgetary allocation in Budget 2025-26. While the Centre insists that the MGNREGA is a demand driven scheme and additional funds are given when required, no upward revisions were made. Therefore, I also urge the ministry to increase the budget allocation for this rural flagship Programme.